

MEDIA RELEASE

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National gender pay gap lowest in 20 years Equal Pay Day will be Friday 31 August 2018

The national gender pay gap has reached its lowest level in 20 years at **14.6%**. So, this year, Equal Pay Day will be on **Friday 31 August**, marking the 62 additional days from the end of the previous financial year that women must work to earn the same pay as men.

Using the latest Average Weekly Earnings data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) has calculated the national gender pay gap as **14.6% for full-time employees, a difference of \$244.80 per week**.

Libby Lyons, Director of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, said it is great news that the gender pay gap is at its lowest point in 20 years.

“This great result is recognition of the work employers have done in addressing issues such as pay equity. By collecting and analysing data, employers know where their gender equality hotspots are and can take action to improve them.

“However, we cannot become complacent as there is still much work to do. All employers need to continue to ensure their employees are paid equitably. Do a pay gap analysis. Report the results to the executive and board. Pay gaps close when leaders see the numbers.

“This improvement in the gender pay gap proves that actions speak louder than words. If every employer in Australia did a pay audit, analysed the results and then took action, we would eventually consign the national gender pay gap to the annals of history,” she said.

Despite this positive result, Ms Lyons also said that Equal Day Pay is still an important reminder that women continue to face significant barriers in the workplace, particularly in terms of pay.

“The gender pay gap is a symptom of a broader issue. It reflects the fact that women’s work is traditionally undervalued and women are often paid less than men. Average full-time salaries are lower for women than men in every occupation and industry in Australia. Women are under-represented in senior executive and management roles and female-dominated occupations and industries attract lower pay than male-dominated ones,” she said.

About the national gender pay gap

The national gender pay gap is the difference between women’s and men’s average weekly full-time base salary earnings, expressed as a percentage of men’s earnings. It is a measure of women’s overall position in the paid workforce and does not compare like roles.

Research shows the main factors contributing to the gender pay gap are:

- discrimination and bias in hiring and pay decisions
- women and men working in different industries and different jobs, with female-dominated industries and jobs attracting lower wages
- women’s disproportionate share of unpaid caring and domestic work
- lack of workplace flexibility to accommodate caring and other responsibilities, especially in senior roles
- women’s greater time out of the workforce impacting career progression and opportunities.

Key facts

- The national gender pay gap is 14.6%. It has declined from 15.3% in the past 12 months.
- On average, women working full-time earned \$1433.60 while men working full-time earned \$1678.40.
- Full-time average weekly earnings difference between women and men is \$244.80.

More information: Gender pay gap information and statistics are available at www.wgea.gov.au

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About the Agency: The Workplace Gender Equality Agency is an Australian Government statutory agency charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces. www.wgea.gov.au.